INFORMATION REPORT INFORMATION REPORT

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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S-E-C-R-E-T 25X1 COUNTRY Czechoslovakia/USSR 25X1 SUBJECT 1. Railroad Transport between DATE DISTR. 9 September 1955 Czechoslovakia and the USSR Czech Shortage of Rolling NO. OF PAGES Stock DATE OF INFO. REQUIREMENT NO. PLACE ACQUIRED REFERENCES 25X1 DATE ACQUIRED This is UNEVALUATED Information SOURCE EVALUATIONS ARE DEFINITIVE APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTAT

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- 1. Czech transport officials, who travel frequently to Cop on the Czechoslovak-Soviet border to arrange for the delivery of Czech goods to the Russians, report that the capacity for loading and unloading from Czech to Soviet railroad cars, and vice versa, is very poor. There are only cranes of small capacity, by which it is understood that two or three tons maximum is neart. The state of the yards and track is said to be poor and in fact the whole area of the marshalling yards and the barracks, which have to serve as a hotel for visitors, is described as derelict.
- On occasions, goods arriving at Cop from either Czechoslovakia or the USSR are delayed for a period of up to three weeks because of the completely ineffective installations for loading and unloading.
- 3. Delays in delivery in Czechoslovakia as a whole are increased by an acute shortage of rolling stock. This shortage is particularly noticeable at the turns of annual quarters and in October, when the potato and sugar beet crops are being transported. There is apparently little possibility that Czech industry can produce anything like the number of railroad cars required, and there appears to be little hope that Czechoslovakia can obtain them from the USSR or elsewhere. Moreover the track, even the all-important one from Prague which runs east to Cop, is poorly maintained. Engineers given special prizes if they cover so and so many kilometers without having an accident. Despite this, it is generally known that accidents are of an alarming frequency.
- 4. It is not thought that there is any intention of installing broad games in Czechoslovakia to join up with the Soviet broad games at Cop. In order to speed up the traffic to and from Cop, however, a third track is being laid parallel to the main line Cop-Kosice-Prerov-Clomouc-Ceska Trebova-Pardubice-Prague.

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S-E-C-R-E-T 25X1 5. In spring 1955, it was noticed on a journey from Prague to Prerov that work on the construction of a third track began some 30 kilometers from Prague and continued intermittently along the whole length of the railway as far as Prerov. It appeared that the embankment had been suitably widened for some two-thirds of the total length of the line concerned, although, so far as can be remembered, there was no continuous length of widened embankment for more than a few kilometers at a time. It cannot be said for certain to what extent the actual third track had been laid on the extended embankment, but it is estimated that the laying has more or less kept pace with the widening of the embankment and that it can be said that the construction of the third track is in an advanced stage of completion for about two-thirds of the line. 2 6. A radical change in the Soviet system of indicating the destinations of consignments of goods from Czechoslovakia to the USSR was introduced at the beginning of 1955. Up to then the Russians allotted "Trans" numbers to all consignments of exports from Czechoslovakia; these consignments were delivered by rail to Cop, and the Russians then took them over. The Czechs did not know what destinations in USSR were indicated by the "Trans" numbers. 7. Since the beginning of 1955, however, the Russians have informed the Czech factories concerned of the actual destinations in the USSR of consignments of goods. The name of the place of destination is clearly marked in the case of each consignment and, so far as is known, there is no attempt at restricting this information. It is thought that this abolition of "Trans" m abers applies to all types of Czech exports to the USSR. 25X1 Comment: The main transloading station between Czechoslovakia and the USSR is Cierna nad Tisou, on the Czech side of the border. It is not clear from the context whether the reference is to Cierna or to Cop. Comment: The distance from Prague to Prerov is not more than 25X1 half the length of the line to Cop. 25X1

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